

SFAI San Francisco Art Institute
800 Chestnut Street
San Francisco, CA 94133-2299
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You are invited to a rare screening and discussion with Sidney Peterson, one of the originators of the American Avant Garde film.

Sidney Peterson, who is in the Bay Area briefly from his home in New York City, was the **FIRST** person to teach filmmaking at SFAI in 1947 when the school was called the California School of Fine Arts.

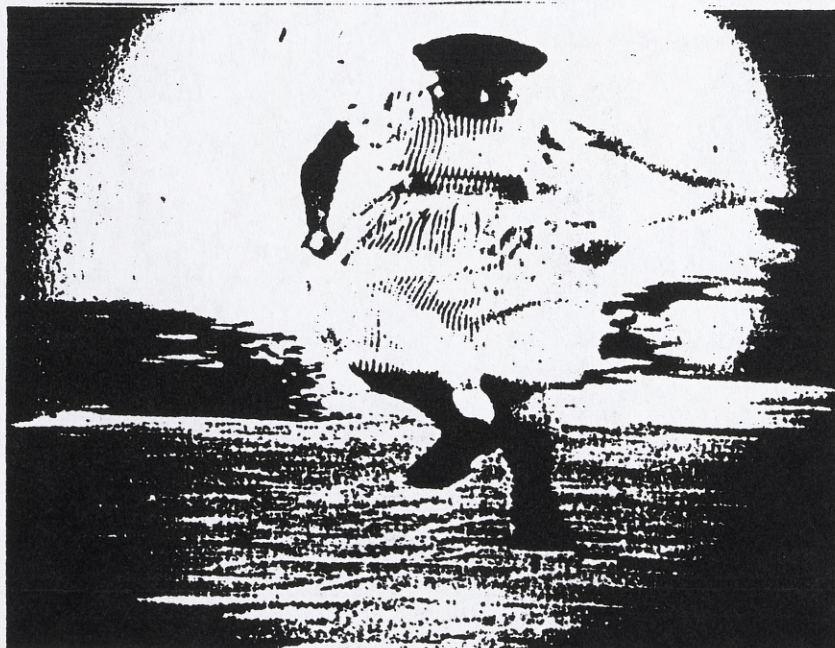
The five films he made in San Francisco between 1947 and 1950 have become classics of film history and have influenced the cinematic education of many of the best filmmakers of the generations which followed him.

His chief films have been The Potted Psalm with James Broughton (1947), The Cage (1947), The Lead Shoes (1949), The Petrified Dog (1948), Mr. Frenhofer & Minotaur (1949) and Man in a Bubble (1981). The Cage and The Lead Shoes were shot at SFAI.

JOIN US FOR AN INFORMAL SCREENING AND DISCUSSION OF SIDNEY PETERSON'S WORK IN STUDIO 26, THIS FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9th, FROM NOON TO 2pm

as he shares with us his unorthodox insights into San Francisco during the birth of American Avant Garde film.

Refreshments will be served.



Frame from *The Lead Shoes*, 1949. Becky Johnston hopscotching.

"If ever there was a time for taking inventory it was at the end of World War II. And San Francisco was a nice place to do it in. I think it was the one urban center in the whole world where respectable old ladies gathering for a cup of tea in a public place enjoyed being mistaken for retired Madams."

Sidney Peterson, The Dark of the Screen

"A Moslem myth has it that the gods created man and woman in heaven for their amusement, providing them with a gastro-intestinal system for which they had no need. They celebrated the event by inviting the newly minted pair to one of those banquets, the falling crumbs of which have been known to turn into manna (a windfall). Inevitably, the time came when the two had to relieve themselves. There were no toilets in heaven. It was all very funny until, at last, one of the Gods took pity on their joint agony, led them to the edge of heaven and pointed to a small far-off planet called Earth where, they were told, they could go relieve themselves. So they did. And that is why, in the whole universe, Earth is the only planet on which art flourishes, for art, too, we are told, is simply a way of relieving oneself. Entire systems of aesthetics have been derived from this simple premise that catharsis is a form of salvation."

Sidney Peterson, The Dark of the Screen

"Sidney Peterson's career as an experimental film maker may well fill the requirements of an archetype; that is, it is significant while it embodies a beginning, rise, peak...and fadeout."

Parker Tyler, Film Culture #19

"The fade-out was long and roughly in three parts, Seattle, New York and Burbank, three places, three opportunities to continue with an experimental life which had to do with film. In Seattle, the fade commenced with Orbit Films, in New York it would continue at the Museum of Modern Art (and TV), and in Burbank it would last through UPA and the Animation Building of the Disney Studio, located, as I recall, on Dopey Drive."

Sidney Peterson, The Dark of the Screen

